MARCH 2022

Rock Talk

The Official Newsletter of the Withlacoochee Rockhounds

The Essence of Iridescent Minerals

Iridescent minerals fit the familiar expression "beauty is in the eye of the beholder." It is one of the mineral kingdom's most fascinating displays of color. The glow, shimmer, sheen, aura and glitter of iridescence has been compared to everything from rainbows, fire, neon lights, and pyrotechnics to kaleidoscopic displays of the northern lights.
The word "iridescence" stems from the Latin words iris, or "rainbow," and descendere, or "coming down." Its literal meaning, "from the rainbow," fits an optical phenomenon that manifests itself as a rainbow-like play of vivid colors.

While iridescence occurs throughout the natural world, notably in certain bird feathers, flower petals, reptile scales, and seashells, it is particularly apparent in minerals. Iridescence can be a diagnostic property in chalcopyrite, bornite, covellite, and other metal sulfides. It can increase the value of mineral specimens and is the basis of the visual appeal of such gem materials as opal, labradorite, and fossil "ammolite."

Iridescence differs from other optical phenomena in the nature of its colors. Most colors are spectral or pigmentary in origin and are produced, respectively, by the diffraction and absorption of white light. But iridescent colors, also called structural colors, have a structural origin and are created by reinforcing reflected light waves.

Light is a form of electromagnetic radiation that is detectable by the human eye. Light exhibits properties of both waves and particles and travels in waves that are measured by frequency (wavelengths), phase (positions of wave crests and troughs), and amplitude (wave magnitude).

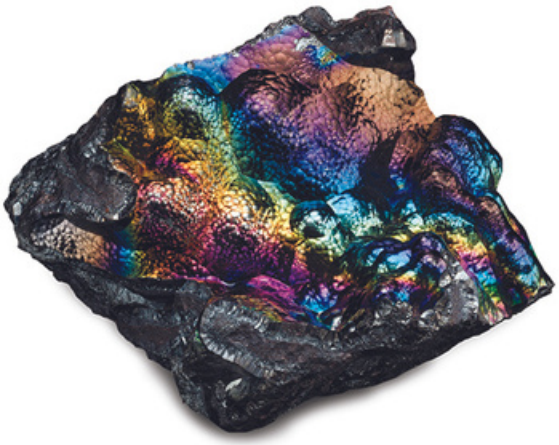
The wavelengths of visible light extend from 380 nanometers (red) to 760 nanometers (violet). "White" light, a mix of all visible wavelengths, can be diffracted or separated into its spectral color components of red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet.

This Month's Roundup of Stories

- Iridescent Minerals
- Secretary's Report
- Steampunk Prospector
- Field Trip Report
- Black Diamond
- Flowers in Amber
- Bench Tips

Examples of spectral colors are the hues of rainbows and the spectrum created when a prism diffracts light. Pigmentary colors are produced when materials absorb specific wavelengths of white light and reflect others. Objects that we perceive as red absorb the orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet wavelengths and reflect only the red wavelengths.

Read the entire article at *RockandGem.com*



Secretary's Report

Minutes and More from Club Secretary - Melodye Steverson

Withlacoochee Rockhounds Monthly Meeting
Date 2/9/2022
Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order by President Judith Birx at 7:00pm.
We all stood for the Pledge of Allegiance followed by a moment of silent prayer.
There were 3 new members to recognize; Diane Hunter Mellring, Dan Stixrude
There were 0 guests in attendance.

Old Business
President Birx began her announcements by re-stating that our meetings will continue to be held under CDC guidelines:

- Masks are now required, even if you are vaccinated
- We are not requiring you show us a vaccine card to enter the building
- Use of hand sanitizer is advised
- Practice social distancing
- Room will be sanitized
- Gloves recommended when handling money

The state is not requiring you to wear a mask, however we are following the CDC guidelines.
If you are sick, please leave. Or if you were in contact with someone who has tested positive for the Corona Virus, please leave.
If you are in the high-risk category, please consider not coming.
You are attending meetings and all activities associated with the Withlacoochee Rockhounds at your own risk.

President Birx continued by saying "Welcome to the Withlacoochee Rockhounds 2022! All current members including members signing up this evening are eligible to win one of the two $50 Gift cards that the club is giving away tonight!"
She then stated that the Pinellas Geological Society had closed down their club after almost 60 years. They closed out their accounts and donated their funds to various charities and other rock clubs in Florida. They had donated $1000 to our club. Treasurer Janet Wheeler will handle the Thank You note from our organization.
VP Janice Wojcik announced her plans for monthly programs in March and April. In March, she will tell us about her trip to the Tyson Wells Rock and Mineral Show in Quartzite, Arizona. She will include pictures and specimens.
In April, she will present a fun game called "Name that slab!", which will include showing pictures of slabs on a screen. Whoever names the most correctly will win a prize!
Janice said Pam Gonzales and she would be teaching a silver class very soon.

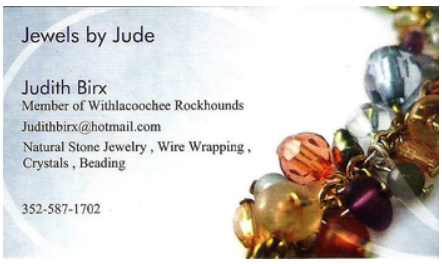
Lauren Bell will be teaching the Free Jewelry Class on the first Tuesday of each month at the Clubhouse from 9am to 12 Noon. March 1st will be Basic Wireworking.
(See her column below)

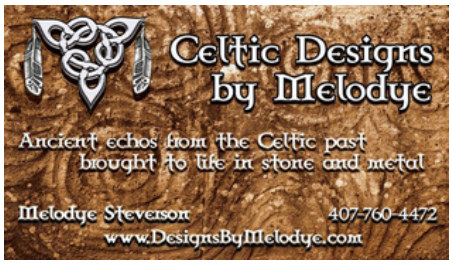
Lynn Walters stated that mining at Graves Mountain had been moved to May 20 – 22. She also announced a Rockhound Roundup being held on July 24 – 31. The cost is $100 for the 8 days of camping and if you want to be a vendor there, it's an extra $50 more.
(See her column below)

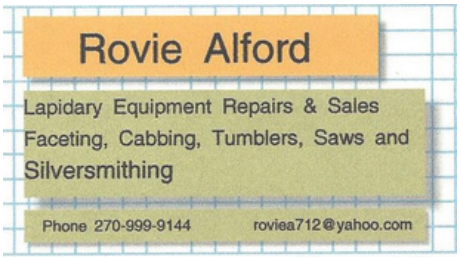
Melodye Steverson made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Lynn Walters seconded, passed by all.
Meeting was adjourned at 7:15pm.
Minutes respectfully submitted by Secretary Melodye Steverson.

Withlacoochee Rockhounds Board of Directors Meeting Minutes
Date 2/24/2022
Attending Board members; Judith Birx, Janice Wojcik, Melodye Steverson, Janet Wheeler, Ralph
Barber, Roberta Oldread, Lauren Bell, Lynn Walters, and Michael Steverson.
Board meeting started at 6:40 pm and was held via the Internet on Zoom.
President Judith Birx had distributed the meeting agenda via Email.
President Birx stated that we need a database of Vendors' contact info for the Gem Show. Janet will get the information to Ginny Steverson who will type it up into a database for the club.
President Birx wants to have reports published in the Rock Talk newsletter regarding mining and field trips.
Lauren Bell and Lynn Walters will keep Michael Steverson updated monthly for the newsletter.
Lauren will be writing a blurb for the newsletter under the title "The Steampunk Prospector".
Lynn has been sending messages to the Vulcan mine and is getting no response. She will continue to contact them.
Lauren Bell's jewelry class will be wire-wrapping basics on March 1 st.
continued on page 9

Rockhounds Advertisers







Your Business Card Size Ad in Rock Talk

The cost for non-club members to advertise their businesses in Rock Talk is $10.00 per month.
Contact Michael Steverson to set up an ad in both the newsletter and the club website. It will benefit both your business and our club.

If you ad has a web address, or Etsy shop address, I have linked to it.

Advertisers Are Needed
Please help us find advertisers for the Rock Talk and our website.
The monthly income from these ads is beneficial to the club.
Both the Rock Talk and our website have more exposure than only club members.
Contact club treasurer Janet Wheeler: ceecgirl@tampabay.rr.com or send to:
Withlacoochee Rockhounds
PO Box 5634 Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

Always stop at bridges!

The Steampunk Prospector

A new column from Lauren Bell

Recently, on my way up to Live Oak for the Annual Rockhound Roundup, I stopped for a break at a boat ramp by a bridge on the Suwannee River.
Hal's W Adam's Bridge to be exact.
It is located on the right side of State Road 51 coming out of Mayo and headed to Luraville.
As per my usual custom, I wandered down to the river, and there at the bottom of the boat ramp, was this piece of Ocala Limestone just peeking up at me through the mud.
I decided to excavate it and it turned into a decent-sized, pretty display of late Eocene invertebrate fossils.
Very similar to what we used to find at Vulcan mine when we had access.
For funsies, I put it out on my table at the roundup and it sold the second day for a whopping 20.00 to a lady who adores it as much as I did.
Not bad at all for stopping to stretch my legs, eh?!

Stopping at bridges is a hobby of mine and has been known to turn a simple 6-hour drive into 12 hours when I get too enthusiastic!

Field Trip Report

A new column from Lynn Walters

Lynn will be supplying us with information about potential trips for the club.

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Graves Mountain
Rock Swap and Dig,
May 20th - 22nd, 2022
Lincolnton, Georgia

Official Field Trip of M.A.G.M.A.

Note date changes for the Rock Swap and Dig!

I have been in contact with Jr. Norman about the May 'Rock Swap and Dig' at the mountain. As of this posting, the dig is on for May, 2022 and back to normal. No reservations needed. Current covid safety precautions must be observed. Masks must be worn when at food and vending booths. Social distancing must be adhered to. If something changes, it will be posted here.

The mountain will be open to collecting from 8 am to 6 pm each day. All attendees must stop at the welcome table to sign a liability release and make a contribution/donation to help with the cost of providing porta johns and golf carts. The dig will end and everyone must be **off** the mountain by 6:00 p.m. each day.

There will be an area in the parking lot for vendors to sell and trade minerals. If you would like to setup a booth, contact Jr. at the phone number listed below. Hot food and drinks will be available for purchase on the mountain all three days.

Graves Mountain Code of Conduct!

Park your vehicle in the designated area at the end of the paved access road.
ALL pets must be kept under control and on a leash.
The caretaker, Jr. Norman has final and absolute say as to where you may safely work.
Ladders or power tools of any kind will not be allowed. (HAND TOOLS ONLY!)
STAY AWAY FROM ALL HIGH WALLS!
NO RAPPELLING OFF OF ANYTHING!
NO ONE IS ALLOWED TO DRIVE THEIR VEHICLE ON ANY PART OF GRAVES MOUNTAIN BEYOND THE PARKING AREA! (The caretaker must accompany anyone driving beyond the parking area!)
EVERYONE NEEDS TO BE OFF THE MOUNTAIN BY 6:00 p.m.

Please protect our ability to field collect at Graves Mountain!
Report violations to:
Jr. Norman
Norman C E Wrecking Co
3333 C E Norman Rd
Lincolnton, GA 30817-3110
706-401-3173
All reported violations will be held in strict confidence.

DIRECTIONS: From Washington Georgia, drive east 11 miles on SR-378, look for mine entrance on right. From the Hardees in Lincolnton, Georgia, drive approximately 5-1/2 miles west on SR-378. Look for the sign at the entrance to Graves Mountain on the left side of the road.

Motels and Camping:
Cullars Inn, Lincolnton, Georgia, 706-359-6161
Soap Creek Lodge, Clarks Hill Lake, Lincolnton, 706-359-3124
Elijah Clark State Park, 706-359-3458 / 800-864-7275

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magma upcoming events, Rick Jacquot
americanrockhound.com

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Cullars Inn, Lincolnton, Georgia, 706-359-6161
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Elijah Clark State Park, 706-359-3458 / 800-864-7275

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19th Annual Western North Carolina Rockhound Roundup
July 24th – 31st, 2022

Hosted by: M.A.G.M.A. and Jacquot & Son Mining

This event will be based at Camp Stephens. This property is located just outside the city of Asheville off of Interstate 26. The camp is just 3.5 miles from the Interstate but located in a secluded wooded area on the French Broad River. There is room for many RV's and tent campers. There is a large indoor pavilion/building with two bathrooms, two showers, a kitchen, electricity and water for the outside campers and inside the pavilion. Campers will be able to swim, fish, canoe, snorkel, etc. in the river. The camp area is completely wooded so there is plenty of shade. Three miles from the camp are numerous gas stations, a mall, restaurants, movie theater, motels/hotels and more.

Campers are welcome to begin arriving Sunday morning to set up camp and get ready for the week's events. Do not arrive before Sunday morning on the 24th as other people will be using the camp before we arrive.

This is the yearly gathering of our club and we welcome all to come join us for a week of fun. Rockhounding, swapping, selling, trading rocks and minerals. Good food and great people!

Agenda:
We have coordinated this event to coincide with the numerous gem and mineral shows that are taking place in Franklin, North Carolina and groups will be visiting the shows daily.

Throughout the week, we will conduct field trips to a selection of local mines and gem shows in the area. Instructions and directions will be provided for everyone, so no one gets lost during the trips. There will be fee discounts for attendees collecting at the Crabtree Emerald Mine and other mines in the area.

There will be tables setup (first come, first serve) at the pavilion for people to sell and trade their rocks, minerals, gems and jewelry. I suggest bringing your own tables to be sure you have what you need to sell.

Saturday the 30th; THE FEAST! Everyone should bring a dish or desert and something to drink. If you need to cook something for the meal, you should start cooking around 1:00 to be ready to eat around 3:00.

Fee for Roundup: $100.00 per person, this covers all 8 days of the Roundup. Full use of the camp area and facilities. Kids 12 and under are free. Vendors who wish to set up and sell at the pavilion, add $50, so, $150 for 8 days. If you plan to only attend a few of the days, the cost will be $20.00 per day.

To reserve your spot, send payment today:

Add to Cart $100 Individual spot for the week.

Add to Cart $150 Vendor spot for the week.

Add to Cart $20 Day Visit.

Or send check or money order to:
Richard Jacquot
PO Box 542
Leicester, NC 28748

Accommodations: Camping on the Camp Stephens property is included in the above cost.

Directions: Take exit 33 off of Interstate 26 just outside of Asheville NC. Go west on Brevard Road/Hwy. 191. Drive 3.5 miles to Clayton Road on the left, turn left and drive 2/10ths of a mile to the entrance to Camp Stephens on the left. I will have a large MAGMA Roundup sign at the entrance.

This roundup is open to all clubs and anyone visiting the area from out of town who would like to attend. You do not need to be a member of any club to attend. We welcome everyone. Remember to bring plenty of rocks and minerals to trade, sell, and show.

For more information, contact Rick Jacquot at: 828-779-4501 or email rick@wncrocks.com

Black 555.55-carat diamond dubbed 'The Enigma' sells for £3.1 MILLION at auction

New meaning to "Black Ice"

The world's largest known cut diamond, a rare 555.55-carat black diamond, has been sold at auction for £3.16 million ($4.28 million).
It is believed to have been formed when an asteroid hit Earth 2.6 to 3.8 billion years ago, although there is a competing theory that it could have come from space.
Named 'The Enigma', the gem was bought by Richard Heart — the founder of cryptocurrency company Hex — following an online auction by Sotheby's in London.

The rock is considered extremely heavy for a diamond, weighing about the same as a banana, and dates back to a time well before the dinosaurs existed on Earth.
It is a carbonado, an extremely rare rock that has only ever been discovered in Brazil and the Central African Republic, and is one of the toughest forms of natural diamond. They are believed to originate from space because they contain osbornite, a mineral found only in meteors, but their precise origins are shrouded in mystery.

'White diamonds and other colored diamonds are typically found in Kimberlite rock and they come up to the surface of the Earth through volcanic eruption.
'Whereas carbonado black diamonds are found in sedimentary alluvial deposits, which means they are carried down by water, such as streams. They are found very near to, if not on, the Earth's surface.'

Read the entire article here at DailyMail.co.uk

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Membership Form
2022

Annual Dues: Individual member, $25.00. Under 18 years of age, $5.00.

☐ Check if returning member

☐ Check if new member

☐ Check if current member with change of information

☐ Check if under 18

Please Print Clearly

Last name _____ First Name _____

Street Address: _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP _____

Phone Number (s) _____

Email address: _____

You may now fill in the fields on this form if you are viewing it on your computer or tablet.
Each field may be clicked on and then you may type in your information.
You will still need to print out the form, but your added information should show on the form.

Give this completed form along with your check for dues made out to "Withlacoochee Rockhounds" to club secretary Janet Wheeler at a club meeting. Or mail the form and your check to:

Withlacoochee Rockhounds
PO Box 5634
Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

2022

99 million-year-old Flowers Found Perfectly Preserved in Amber Bloomed at the Feet of Dinosaurs

If they open it, do we get Jurassic Hay Fever?

Flowers discovered perfectly preserved in globs of amber bloomed at the feet of dinosaurs, suggesting that some flowering plants in South Africa today have remained unchanged for 99 million years, a new study reveals.

The two flowers once bloomed in what is now Myanmar and may shed light on how flowering plants evolved -- a major episode in the history of life that was once described by Charles Darwin as an "abominable mystery."

Flowers are ephemeral: They bloom, transform into a fruit and then disappear. As such, ancient flowers aren't well represented in the fossil record, making these ancient blooms -- and the history they carry with them -- particularly precious.

"Leaves are generally produced in larger numbers than flowers and are much more robust -- they have a higher preservation potential. A leaf is discarded 'as is' at the end of its useful life, while a flower transforms into a fruit, which then gets eaten or disintegrates as part of the seed dispersal process," said study author Robert Spicer, a professor emeritus in the School of Environment, Earth and Ecosystem Sciences at The Open University in the United Kingdom.

"These particular flowers are almost identical to their modern relatives. There really are no major differences," added Spicer, who is also a visiting professor at Xishuangbanna Tropical Botanical Garden in China.

Read the entire article here at CNN.com

continued from page 2

Janice Wojcik and Pamela Gonzalez are preparing to teach a silver class.
They took the student toolboxes home to go through them and Janice said the boxes looked good and needed a few tools.
She is compiling a list of elements they will need for teaching the class and will turn that into the Board.

Lynn Walters and Janice Wojcik stated there will be a "Fossil Fest" on March 23rd and will be putting the information on FaceBook.
Janice will be sending program information for the next two months to Michael for the newsletter.
Roberta Oldread will be changing the Club's FaceBook banner picture.

The next topic was membership drive ideas.
Instead of gift cards, next time we will give rocks as prizes.

We will have our Gem Show flyer at the Tampa club show.
Janice Wojcik volunteered to do a flyer.

Lauren Bell suggested the club should set up at Friday Brooksville Main Street, the second Friday through May from 5-9 pm to attract new members.
We will hand out flyers and show specimens there.
Lynn Walters and Roberta Oldread will go on April 11th.
We will need volunteers to man the booth in May.
Roberta Oldread volunteered to be the new photographer for the Club.

Lynn Walters made a motion to adjourn the meeting, Roberta Oldread seconded, passed by all.
The meeting ended at 7:35 pm.
Respectfully submitted by Secretary Melodye Steverson

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Our monthly club meeting is held at the Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Club, 3357 Susan Dr., Spring Hill, FL 34606, on the 2nd Wednesday of each month from 7:00 to 9:00 PM

www.withlacoocheerockhounds.com

Your Business Card Size Ad in Rock Talk

The cost for non-club members to advertise their businesses in Rock Talk is $10.00 per month. Contact Michael Steverson to set up an ad in both the newsletter and the club website. It will benefit both your business and our club.

Advertisers Needed

Please help us find advertisers for the *Rock Talk* and our website. The club can use the monthly income. Both the *Rock Talk* and our website have more exposure than only club members

Contact club treasure Janet Wheeler: ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com
or send to:
Withlacoochee Rockhounds
PO Box 5634
Spring Hill, FL 34611-5634

Withlacoochee Rockhounds

Purpose

We are a non-profit organization whose pupose is to foster interest and promote knowledge of minerals, gems, fossils, lapidary arts, and earth sciences, through regular meetings, informative programs, workshops, and field trips. PLUS, our annual gem, mineral and jewelry show.

Membership is open to anyone sharing such interests.

Dues

Dues are $25.00 annually for adults, and $5.00 for children under 18 years of age.

Club Meeting Location and time

Weeki Wachee Senior Citizens Center, 3357 Susan Dr in Spring Hill. The meetings are held the secind Wednesday of the month at 7:00PM

2022 Club Officers and Appointees

President	Judith Birx	352.587.1702	judithbirx@hotmail.com
Vice President	Janice Wojcik	813.677.6263	jfwojcik@verizon.net
Secretary	Melodye Steverson	352.683.9496	melodye@designsbymelodye.com
Treasurer	Janet Wheeler	727.938.3644	ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com
Rock Talk Editor	Michael Steverson	407.376.5570	highlander56@gmail.com
Club Webmaster	Michael Steverson	407.376.5570	highlander56@gmail.com
Mailing Reporter	Janet Wheeler	727.938.3644	ceegirl@tampabay.rr.com
Gem Bag Coordinator	Gloria DuPont	352.848.5199	ddupont@tampabay.rr.com
Audio/Visual Coordinator	Michael Steverson	407.376.5570	highlander56@gmail.com

Board of Directors

Judith Birx (President) Janice Wojcik (Vice President) Melodye Steverson (Secretary) Janet Wheeler (Treasurer)
Roberta Oldread (2022) Lynn Walters (2022) Lauren Bell (2022) Michael Steverson (2022) Ralph Barber (Past President)

Bench Tips from Brad Smith

Brad Smith's *Bench Tips* are a monthly feature of Rock Talk

TWISTING WIRE

Twisting wire can be done with an old hand drill but goes much faster with a power tool. My preference is to use a screw gun, although a Foredom should do well.

Just make a little hook out of coat hanger wire (or use a screw-in cup hook) and chuck it up in your screw gun. Grip the free ends of the wire in a vice and slip the looped end onto your hook.
Keep a little tension on the wires as you twist.

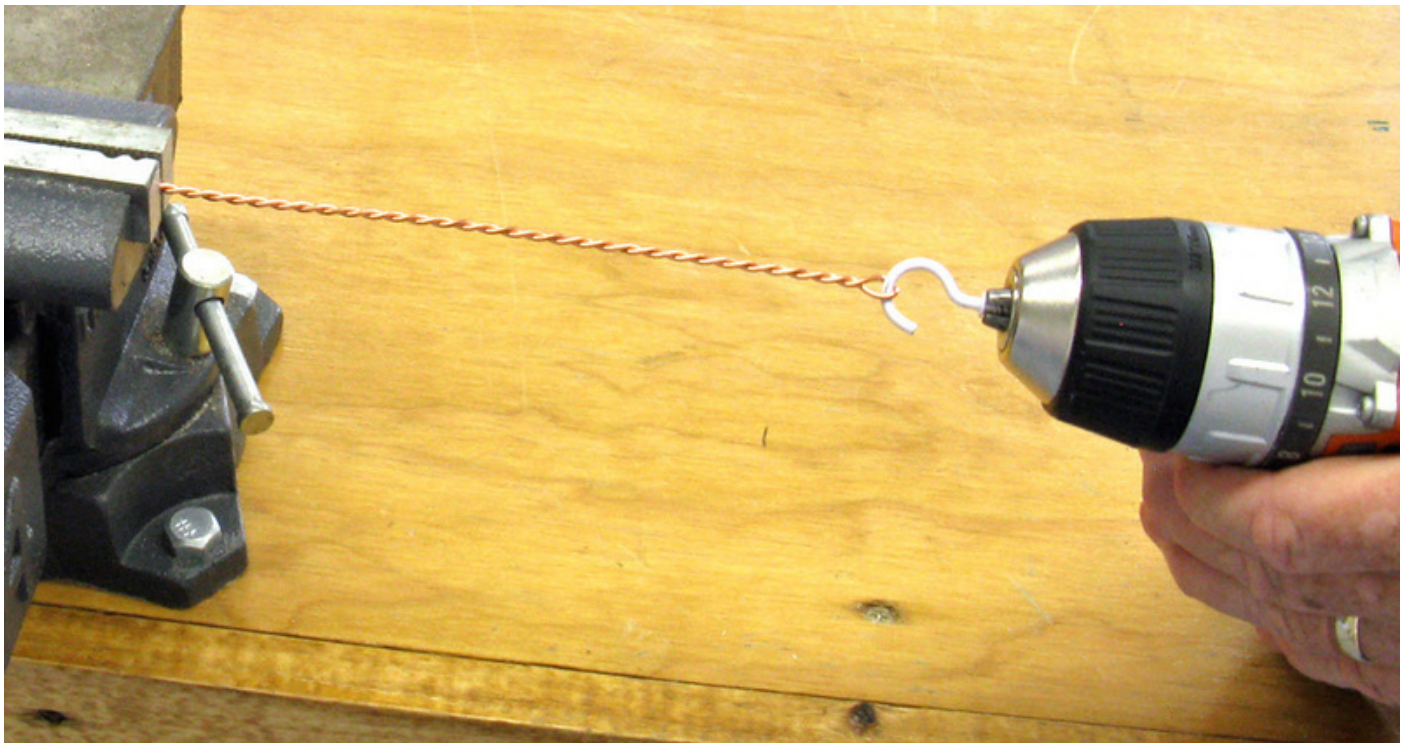
Note that a power drill is too fast a tool for this unless you have one with variable speed.

SOLDERING PRONGS

I often use prongs to hold an irregular cab or other objects on rings and pendants. But prongs can be a little tricky to solder. You have to find some way to hold them all upright while soldering, and the simple butt joint that looks strong sometimes breaks when you start to bend the prong over the stone. There's nothing worse than having a prong break off when you're setting the stone *#~*!

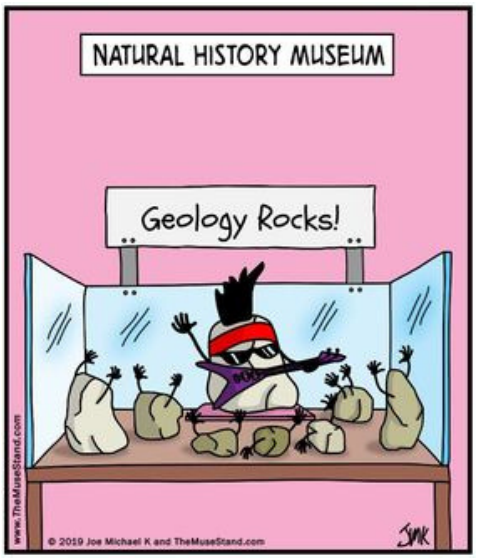
I solved both problems with one little trick. It keeps the prongs in position for soldering, and it gives you a stronger joint at the same time.

Locate and center punch the position for each prong. Then drill holes a little smaller than your prong wire. Sand a small taper on the ends of your prong wires and stand them up in the holes. The wires support themselves, soldering is easy, and the joint is stronger because of the increased soldering area.

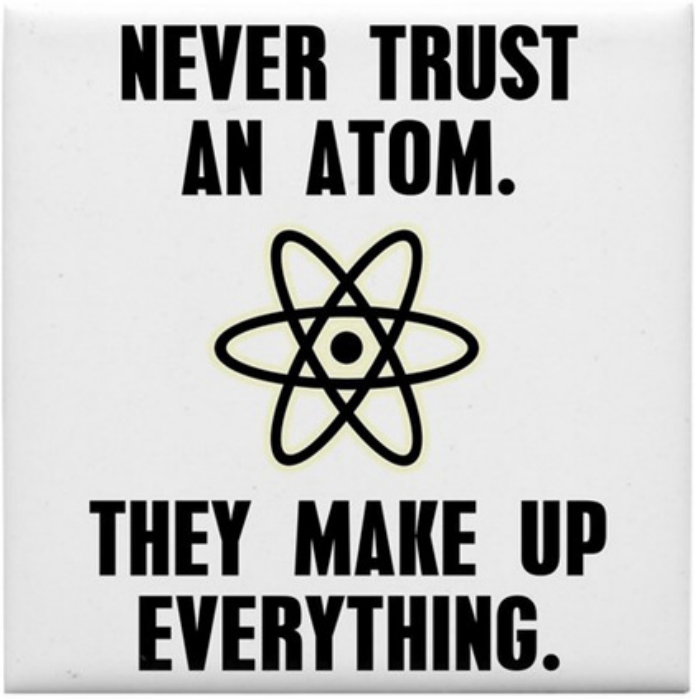


Learn New Skills with Brad's "How To Do It" Books
Amazon.com/author/bradfordsmith

Rock Talk Funny Papers



Labradorite by PlasticBeachComic Zazzle



From The Editor

Hello to all Withlacoochee Rockhounds

It is I, your friendly neighborhood editor again.

If you missed our February meeting, you missed our annual party. You also missed some great food, which the club provided, and a rousing game of Rock Bingo! No blood was shed and a great time was had by all!

Jewelry classes are starting back up. Lauren Bell instructed in our first one for this year. Thank you, Lauren!

We have two new columns in the newsletter this month. One from Lauren Bell, and one from Lynn Walters.

If you would like to place a business card ad in the newsletter, please feel free to contact me, and we'll get you added to the next available issue.

Additionally, if any of you have not received your newsletter or are not receiving my e-mail blasts (meetings, rock sales, etc.), *please* check your spam folder. If you still are not receiving them, please contact me, and let's make sure I have your correct e-mail address. I have a few of you who unsubscribed from the mailings. I cannot add you back to the list. You have to subscribe to get back on the list. It's a permissions thing.

Our Board would like our members to come up with suggestions for Programs to be presented at our monthly meetings. What would you like to see? What would you like to learn? What would you like to know? Is there something you'd like to teach or present? You can help our club expand its educational repertoire. We'd love to hear from you all.

Contact any Board member or bring your written suggestions to a meeting.

Rock On!!!

Club Phone Number - 352.587.2714

Warning to Withlacoochee Rockhound Members

During the last several months, illicit requests have been sent to members of various clubs in the US, including the Withlacoochee Rockhounds, asking members to purchase gift cards that would be used as donations to various organizations.

These are SCAMS.

Be advised that our club has never and will never ask members to buy gift cards or provide any form of monitary funds to anyone or any organization by phone call, email, or any other method of communication.